"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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DEUS LOCI

(Forio d'Ischia)

LAWRENCE DURRELL

" era nel tempo quendo Filomena . . . "

1

All our religions founder, you
remain, small sunburnt deus loci
safe in your natal shrine,
landscape of the precocious southern heart,
continuously revived in passion's common
tragic and yet incorrigible spring:
in every special laughter overheard,
your specimen is everything—
accents of the little cackling god,
part animal, part insect, and part bird.

2

This dust, this royal dust, our mother
modelled by spring-belonging rain
whose soft blank drops console
a single vineyard's fever or a region
falls now in soft percussion on the earth's
old stretched and wrinkled vellum skin:
each drop could make one think
a footprint of the god, but out of season,
yet in your sudden coming know
life lives itself without recourse to reason.

3

On how many of your clement springs
the fishermen set forth, the foresters
resign their empty glasses, rise,
confront the morning star, accept
the motiveless patronage of all you are—
desire recaptured on the sea or land
in the fables of fish, or grapes held up,
a fistfull of some champion wine
glowing like a stained-glass window
in a drunkard's trembling hand.

4

All the religions of the dust can tell—
this body of damp clay that cumbered so
Adam, and those before, was given him,
material for his lamp and spoon and body:
to renovate your terra cotta shrines
whose cupids unashamed
to make a fable of the common lot
curled up like watchsprings in a kiss,
or turned to *putti* for a lover's bed,
or *amorini* for a shepherd's little cot.

5

Known before the expurgation of gods
wherever nature's carelessness exposed
her children to the fear of the unknown—
in families gathered by hopeless sickness
about a dying candle, or in sailors
on tilting decks and under shrouded planets:
wherever the unknown has displaced the known
you encouraged in the fellowship of wine
of love and husbandry: and in despair
only to think of you and you were there.

6

The saddle-nose, the hairy thighs
composed these vines, these humble vines,
so dedicated to themselves yet offering
in the black froth of grapes their increment
to pleasure or to sadness where a poor
peasant at a husky church-bell's chime
crosses himself: on some cracked pedestal
by the sighing sea sets eternally up,
item by item, his small mid-day meal,
garlic and bread, the wine-can and the cup.

7

Image of our own dust in wine!
drinkers of that royal dust pressed out
drop by cool drop in science and in love
into a model of the absconding god's
image—human like our own. Or else in other

mixtures, of breath in kisses dropped
under the fig's dark noonday lantern, yes,
lovers like tenants of a wishing-well
whose heartbeats labour though all time has stopped.

8

Your panic fellowship is everywhere,
not only in love's first great illness known,
but in the exile of objects lost
to context, broken hearts, spilt milk,
oaths disregarded, laws forgotten:
or on the seashore some old pilot's
capital in rags of sail, snapped oars,
water-jars choked with sand,
and further on, half hidden, the fatal letter
in the cold fingers of some marble hand.

9

Deus loci. your provinces extend
throughout the domains of logic,
beyond the eyes watching from dusty murals,
or the philosopher's critical impatience
to understand, to be done with life:
beyond beyond even the mind's dark spools
in a vine-wreath or an old wax cross
you can become the nurse and wife of fools,
their actions and their nakedness—
all the heart's profit or the loss.

10

So today, after many years, we meet
at this high window overlooking
the best of Italy, smiling under rain,
that rattles down the leaves like sparrow-shot,
scatters the reapers, the sunburnt girls,
rises in the sour dust of this table,
these books, unfinished letters—all
refreshed again in you O spirit of place,
Presence long since divined, delayed, and waited for,
And here met face to face.

★

THE END OF A RAINY DAY

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

When eventide assuages rain-sweptday,
How softly bloom on moist and melted sight,
Like lotos floating on the silver-grey,
All mortal masks of anguish and delight!
Sardonic conflicts, suave deceptions done,
The soothed relaxing dusk sighs armistice:
In this mild moment all the coil is spun,
And lips desire not to deride or kiss.
Even a branded face, half-sad, half-kind,
Resumed by some lost innocence, seems to be
As if surrendered to the Dream behind,
Inexplicable substance of Eternity—
Rigors of fear and fury wiped away
When evenfall closes a rain-swept day.

THE LOVERS

WILFRID GIBSON

Venturing upon Crag Lough's black starlit ice,
The lad, too restless now to seek his bed,
Stood gazing at the scars
Of whinstone soaring sheerly overhead;
And thought how from that very spot,
As like as not,
In bygone days beneath the Winter stars
A scouting Pict had watched a sentry pace
Along the ridge, and dreamed of some device
To hurl the embattled Romans from their Wall
And rid the Border country of their thrall;
And how that scout and sentry, too, maybe,
For all their enmity,
Had both been lovers, even as he,
Whose hearts were haunted by some woman's face.

SUMMER EVENING

R. H. MOTTRAM

Down endless vistas of the evening cloud
The golden shafting glitters, and the proud
Pomp of the day declines to wistful peace.
The birds are still, and human triflings cease.
Folk are dispersed in garden, field and lane,
And distant figures sprig the twilit plain,
While, at high windows, voices low and mild
Are heard to hush softly the wakeful child.

Calling his mother, inconsolable,
A small boy weeps, but why, he cannot tell:
"It is so lovely, lonely, and so far,
The Heaven where you, and I, you say, must go,
Empty except one tiny evening star . . .
Shall I find you there? Will the angels know?"

THE AQUARIUM

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

Some are like terrible shadows seen in dreams,
With dumb voracious mouths roaming for ever
In the green ocean of these confined streams,
Urged on by some inscrutable endeavour,

And there are some gaunt shapes, dark armoured things,
Writhing in their pre-human cells of fear
And lurking greed, the old and monstrous kings
Of realms far sunken down from Now or Here;

But Beauty here has also sown the deep
With silver flame and sides of coral and jade,
And tiny flakes of iridescent pearl,

Like floating flowers from coloured crystal made,
Flocks of faint ecstasy, pure as infant sleep,
Moving like smiles of love through the clear whirl. . .

SONG

STANLEY SNAITH

Time was, you lit a dreaming pool,
  O charmed one, becalmed one,
Nourishing from yourself the blossom
  Of the solitary will,
Like the stillness-loving swan.

Who shall contain you, now you force
  With burning feet, with morning feet,
The frozen passes to my secret,
  And the sentried dale is shaken
As the wind-taken wheat?

O may the omen, not too late,
  Halt with its shade your perilous tread:
For love is a sorry actuary
  Of the ransom down the years
When tears are strictly paid.

ROSENEATH, N.Z.

For D. L. Matheson

D'ARCY CRESSWELL

When I look round me from the high, bare hills
Of your estate, and see the wild array
Of chasm-wearing streams which you convey
Into the lower fields by gradual rills
Of gentler slope—how Nature, too, fulfils
Through you, her widening purpose in this way:
I think of human life, the sad decay
Of simpler tasks, and all ensuing ills.

Wild as these rivers once Life's current ran,
In harmony with Nature's voice within,
Who taught men heavenly speech, and how to plan
Such work as yours—*her* science, and no sin
Till his own voice he heard, unhappy Man!
And, deaf to hers, *his* science did begin.

MEMORIAL

WRENNE JARMAN

For lost great causes, swathed cathedral bells:
  For heroes, cairns of public interest
  In squares and noble places,—for the rest,
Crouched angels, funeral jars and immortelles.
For you, who wore awhile our shadowed cells,
  Then put them off as if too heavy-dressed,
  What monument to praise a sign impressed
Deep as a thistledown that briefly dwells?

You are not celebrated, not remembered
  Save by a dusty sorrow's sudden dart,
    A book-pressed pansy's perfume. No white stone
Gives back your name: no urn of jade or amber
  Engraves your date and history but my heart,
    Marked mortally as by a sword unknown.

DIAGNOSIS

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

This infant crying from a bedroom brims
The street, and storms the horizon's blood-red rims.
A wounded beast tugging its iron cage
Maintains no blinder impotence of rage.

My friends, divines and deft psychologists,
Aver the reason why it so persists
Is ancient Adam's wrath, and nothing more.
"It's belly-rot that makes the bantling roar,
And not a scholard shall larn me otherwise",
Runs the grim verdict of the laundryman.
"Nonsense. It's Nature's law of exercise
For growing lungs", our cocksure doctor laughs.

My crony-connoisseur of epitaphs
And field-club wit at Roman excavations
Declares that since the fight of flesh began

The new-born jigs to battle with ululations:
That all the bugles of the legionaries
Before and after Caesar wrote his commentaries
Are stoutly recapitulated in
A month-old baby's death-defying din.

I know, I know—and trust my intimations
That the war-widow's words are far more true:
She shakes her head and fancies that the child
Sobs till it chokes because it feels what wild
Fear-crazy jungle it is born into.

POET

JOHN GAWSWORTH

He, without a penny,
May yet hold that pen
Which turns disdain of many
To the praise of all men.

APPEAL

Addressed to a persistent suitor by one whose husband is absent on a distant frontier.

After the Chinese of Chin Ch'ang-Hsü.

HUGH GORDON PORTEUS

Pray go away
O golden oriole
Who sing as you cling
to the window-tapping wistaria!
For your plaintive distracting notes
Are driving me nearer and nearer
the verge of hysteria!

It is not as if *I*
could fly to the high
hills of Manchuria!

POEM

PHOEBE HESKETH

Love me more or love me less,
But love me not the way you do
Fearing the body's rhythmic stress
Will beat again between us two.

If you would cease to love me, then
With safety we could share again
The faithless coil by which all men
Released from love are bound in pain.

But love me with that deathless part
Which kindles when the blood is cold,
Then safe within the other's heart
A sure dominion each may hold.

MAIDEN SONG

(Translated from the Greek of Alcman).

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

No longer, young girls with honey-sweet voices ringing,
Have my knees strength to bear me; and I wish, and I wish I could be
An ocean-martlet, that careless-hearted goes flying
Over the bloom of the waves, among the sea-swallows—
That bird of Spring, dark purple in plume like the sea.

THE WINTER OF LOVE

DAVID MARCUS

Clouds came down from the clouds to walk the pavements,
And I called after them, my hardy friends,
Who took my love away in a closed pavilion
And set her counting the hours till daylight ends.

She picked up the yellow folds of her dress of goldness
And marshalled the bluebells out of the growing corn;
O bright in the dark was the hue of that distant gladness
As red as the blood that clamours to kiss the thorn.

In the night we had found how the branches of love are laden
With fruit that is ripe for the thief or the wolf to destroy,
And her body was blessed like an orchard that reaches its season
And leans to the fingers that gather the weight of its joy.

The day I awoke to the lure of that miracle harvest
I planted an acre with seeds of perennial flame,
And the sun brought them splendidly forth like a chorus of dancers
That spattered the landscape with colours her magic would name.

I walked to the headland and lay with my back to the labour
And measured the weather that argued to climb my arms,
And a blade of its grass could have opened a road to my centre
That hungered to empty its hiveful of love in swarms.

But swiftly the blight had descended to wander my Eden,
And tattered the garments that covered my angel's breast;
The touch of her skin was a serpent encircling my body,
The fork of her kisses had branded my lips with their crest.

O now I may wander the fields of a savage location
And curse at the scarecrows that cherish these ugly lands,
But all I can reap is the poisonous hail of the morning
That murdered my loved one and rotted the soil in my hands.

ODI ET AMO

GEORGE MOOR

As fire catches the grass of the prairie,
Love in an instant my heart consumed.
I looked and I loved. (What a fool! What a weakling!)
I knew I was doomed.

And she, the Astarte, I saw her this morning.
Never a word she or I said.

But I looked back, and unseen saw—I hate her—
The triumph in her tread.

Sleepwalker-like I yield the keys of freedom.
A fine net holds me; it is spun of her,
Tangling my waking senses; shut for sleeping,
She still is there.

ILLUSIVE HOUR

ARTHUR CADDICK

I take your hand upon this height,
This Cornish hill above the sea,
And, on a time-lost summer day,
There radiates across the bay
An infinite immensity
Of almost living crystal light.

So, on a mountain side in Greece
When all the world was touched with dew,
Long long ago a pair might stand,
A hand might take another's hand—
O shall those hands be ours anew,
And shall we let the present cease?

Then in your hyacinthine hair
The sun shall seek idyllic hues,
The wind, caressing there, shall find
Its own anemones entwined,
And nectarines from Syracuse
Shall cool your lips and scent the air,

Shall lend the air illusive breath,
And we will cheat the modern sky,
And capture in transmuted space
The carelessness of Attic grace,
And, for an hour's brief spell, deny
The fact that love must end in death.

THE LOVED ONE
or
THE DEATH OF A NAZI

JAMES BROCKWAY

Yesterday we buried him,
Who was always dapper, tidy, trim,
Whose watch was never fast or slow,
Kept all the facts in a neat little row.

Who was handy at figures, a catalogue brain—
Could always oblige with the time of a train;
Put him wise to a thing—he already knew,
Could always go one better than you.

Happy all day filling up little forms,
Loved medals, brevets, uniforms,
Kept red leather bindings arrayed on his shelf,
Stuck to his library thriller himself.

Adept at offering innocent bribes,
Knew what a man smokes and what he imbibes;
In the war there was nothing that smile couldn't get—
And the timely display of the right cigarette.

A little man in love with the Great,
Who, toppling, abandoned him to his fate;
Who chose his Gods on the losing side—
Was it error, conviction, or pig-headed pride?

A little too clever, too sure of himself,
Not really the colour I care for myself,
But for one who outlives him, a God to defend,
Alpha and Omega, World Without End.

A GRASMERE PILGRIMAGE

BY THEODORA ROSCOE

It was a soft April evening when I reached Grasmere, that grey Westmorland village to which we had come to pay tribute to the memory of Wordsworth. From every tree and budding green bush came the fluting notes of blackbirds. On either side rose the hills, veiled in an evening light. The hour struck eight from the square church tower. The green grass on the graves was gay with daffodils, mostly the small wild ones.

I walked through the secluded graveyard, beneath some yew trees to the graves of William Wordsworth, of Dorothy his sister, and of his wife and children. It was quiet, save for the rippling sound of water from the little river Rotha which flows by, and the birds' voices. Those few moments alone in the surroundings that the poet and Dorothy loved, and where they now rest, was a prelude to the celebrations about to commemorate the Centenary of Wordsworth's death at Rydal Mount. Would the tributes to be paid by literary men and women from all nations, drive away the spirit of the poet?

But among those hills and in the grey village which the poet knew and where he had been a familiar figure, we came very near to him and to his poetry. For it was on a pilgrimage that men and women had come, a pilgrimage to do honour both to the man and to his works; and this sympathetic influx did not disturb the tranquil atmosphere; if anything, personalities became merged in the charm of that grey village among the hills, and in the memory of the poet.

Miss Helen Darbishire, Trustee of Dove Cottage and the ardent Wordsworthian scholar welcomed in an informal, friendly manner the various representatives. Professor Ernest Bernbaum spoke for American scholars; Monsieur Pierre Lecouis, the son of the author of *La Jeunesse de Wordsworth,* represented French scholarship; Professor Dover Wilson, the Shakespearean critic, gave some happy tributes to Wordsworth's influence on readers to-day; and the poet's great, great grandson, the Reverend Christopher Wordsworth, who had a startling resemblance to the portraits of the poet, spoke for the family.

Such was the congenial opening in the village hall at Grasmere. Lord Beveridge, in a long paper the next morning, styled Wordsworth a disillusioned revolutionary. But to those who admire Dorothy, the poet's sister, it was pleasing to hear him give first place to her influence and inspiration in the poet's career and poetry. "She made him a poet," were Lord Beveridge's words. And after Dorothy he placed Coleridge, and the

French Revolution as the two influences to which Wordsworth owed his best work.

Professor Basil Willey in a more controversial and highly stimulating lecture followed Lord Beveridge. He did not, he said, wish to load the poet with platitudes, but placed him first in the English romantic poets. His real strength lay in poetic imagination. The poet regarded himself as a teacher, but were his teachings valid to-day? Why not ignore them and enjoy his poetry. Many of Wordsworth's beliefs, he continued, were outmoded. Do mountains make men more philanthropic? Are mountain lovers more kind? Are they not rather more proud and egotistical? But in conclusion the Professor acknowledged, that it was to the fells (hills) that lovers of Nature returned to find silence and solitariness.

In Dove Cottage, a short distance out of Grasmere, the spirit of Wordsworth and Dorothy seemed very near, because in her Journal every detail has been recorded. How often in those casual entries, do we find the germ of one of her brother's poems. One May day she wrote:

"The quietness and still seclusion of the valley affected me even to producing the deepest melancholy."

Compare the poet's: "In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts, bring sad thoughts to the mind."

Her minute descriptions of people and places showed an artist's observation of detail, but there is no record of her having expressed herself in pencil or paint. As she writes: "O, thought I, what a beautiful thing God has made winter to be, by stripping the trees, and letting us see their shapes and forms. What a freedom does it seem to give to the storms."

In the Museum, opposite Dove Cottage, there were assembled many fascinating manuscripts for the Commemoration, and among the most interesting to me were the opened pages of Dorothy's Journal, written with the freshness and spontaneity that showed her urge to express her delight and interest in the smallest flower, the ordinary bird, the quiet scene.

The present curator of Dove Cottage is a lover of birds. The chaffinches hop on to the window-sill and flutter in. It is above this window that Dorothy saw the swallow's nest that she watched being built, and of which she wrote: "I looked up at my swallow's nest, and it was gone. It had fallen down. Poor little creatures, they could not themselves have been more distressed than I was. I went upstairs to look at the ruins." She then described how they sat in their half-finished nest: "Every now and then there was a motion in their wings, a sort of tremulousness, and they sang a love song to one another."

Behind Dove Cottage, in that steep little garden the thrushes and blackbirds were still singing in the tender green foliage, just as Dorothy and William heard them. It was here that I loved to linger during those few unforgettable days. But there were other places arranged for the Wordsworthians to see.

A visit to Wordsworth's birthplace at Cockermouth surprised many Wordsworthians. This stately, eighteenth-century town house, with its spacious, panelled rooms reminded us that the poet and brothers and sister had known a dignified beginning to their lives. It is indeed a contrast to the simplicity of Dove Cottage. The poet, as a boy, found inspiration and delight in the hills surrounding his formal home, as he described in *The Prelude*.

After the Archbishop of York had preached in the small church on Sunday morning, two wreaths, made of Wordsworth's favourite flowers, the lesser celandine, the dog violet, primroses, daffodils and kingcups, were laid by his great, great, great grandchildren on the poet's grave.

The three days commemoration ended with the reading of his poems in the old church on Sunday evening, by Miss Darbishire, Cecil Day Lewis and the poet's great, great grandson. Many different opinions had been voiced by literary critics but in that small grey village it was the spirit of the poet and of Dorothy that prevailed, because they had taken inspiration from the eternal things, from the hills and dales, lakes and streams, flowers and birds, and all these were around us, and they gave us back much that the poet had given us.

SEVEN NEW POEMS

BY LIONEL JOHNSON

SELECTED BY IAIN FLETCHER

The Poetry Review is indebted to Mr. Iain Fletcher for the opportunity of publishing his latest Johnsonian discoveries. Mr. Fletcher writes: "The following poems have been selected from a MS. given to me by the Rev. W. G. Henn of Perth, Western Australia, a personal friend of Johnson's. There are twenty-three poems altogether. Most of them appear to date from the winter 1884–85 and have been written at Mold, Flintshire, where Johnson's father had a house for some years (*v.* the references to Wales). Many of these poems, I think it may be claimed, possess a metrical assurance and mastery of phrase unexpected in a boy of seventeen".

(I)

Cold is crept upon the gold
Where the sun is low:
Seagulls wheeling over the wold
Scream and seaward go.

Under the chill of the hills
I watch their northern flight:
No gleam of the lost eyes fills
Mine own with a strange delight.
Then in the wan Welsh land
Spring lingers on her way:
And my heart can understand,
For, he is away.

(3)

Cold sunlight slanting down cold hills
Upon my passion:
Cold waters rippling chilly rills
Babbling a hard compassion:
What profits it to live in such a fashion?
But a hundred miles and more
*Through the old, sweet city**
Birds of spring are singing evermore
Their pure love-ditty,
Yea, though this barren sunlight pales away
For crystal cold, clear glows their passionate day
With burning blue: and it is far away.

(6)

And is it your voice indeed
In the chambers of the world,
With a song for its need
With a cry for the joy of it whirled
As the sun and the heights of light?
Is this your voice indeed,
That flings a multiple delight
On the blossom of even a weed?

The voice and passion of beautiful sound
Still in the heart o' the world
Lies a perilous grief upcurled
At thought of the golden passions drowned
In the mist of an ancient death.
Yea, this is indeed your voice,
That for all its wonder of woven breath
The enemy still destroys.

* Winchester–Editor.

(13)

Ah, what is the sea of crystal
And what is the sapphire throne?
The light of your eyes is my crystal sea
Your eyes are my sapphire stone.
And what if I lose my heaven,
And what if I have my hell?
Your love is the whole of heaven,
Your love is the whole of hell:
For your eyes are brighter than heaven,
Your eyes are deeper than hell.

(21)

Among the fields of the morning star
Strays the spirit I find not here,
Under the morning star
When the flush of the east is clear,
Among the rose and the lily beds
There she wanders afar;
Through the fields of the morning star
Where the light outspreads.

Over the lawns of the evening star
Glides the spirit I there shall find,
Over the evening star:
When the death of the sun is blind,
Among the reed and the poppy beds
There she lingers afar;
On the lawns of the evening star
Where the light downspreads.

(22)

Passion-blind agony of sound,
Voice of a lost wind
Mournful over a waste ground
Away from mankind;
Pain-garrulous wail of a wind
Astray in the cold,
Piercing the thin air of a treeless world
Where light is blind:—
Wind, are there any wildered upon the waste,
Wail no more, mourn never more;
For the hour of death is overpast,
And we are sacred voices evermore.

(23)

Was it merely so at first
When a pale star in the tremulous air
Palpitated, and the nightingales outburst
In the rich-breathed laurels there?

And he loved me then, I know,
And I know how much I loved him then:
And again these nightingales' quick raptures flow
To the hearts of women and men.

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP

BY MARVIN MAGALANER

(City College of New York)

The day was fair, and a good-sized crowd found its way, on January 1, 1913, to a shop which was celebrating its formal opening. That the route wound through the narrow streets of the slum district in the heart of old London, "five minutes' walk from the British Museum", did not appear to dishearten the customers, the visitors, or the idly curious. Those who knew the state of modern poetry, financially at least, probably saw nothing incongruous in the indigent surroundings of 35, Devonshire Street, Theobald's Road; those who knew Harold Monro's romantic idealism certainly were not shocked to discover that he had brought his commercial enterprise into line with his view that poetry should be easily accessible to all the people. Robert Frost was there, unknown and uninvited, sitting on the stairs. F. S. Flint spoke to him of Ezra Pound, a name which meant nothing to his fellow American.

Hopefully, Monro had sounded the opening gun in his campaign to make the Bookshop a success as a business and as a directing force in Georgian letters. The November, 1912 issue of his magazine, *The Poetry Review*, had stated the case:

> Let it not be imagined that we intend to enter into competition with the recognized booksellers of London; we are merely undertaking to supply the class of literature which they . . . consider unmarketable . . . the public for poetry is not a small one; but . . . unorganized, scattered and strangely unguided. Our purpose is to draw this public together

and bring it into touch, through the Bookshop, with poetry as a living art, and as represented in the work of living poets.

Strange as it must seem to those who have grown up in a world of almost unrestricted economic competition, Monro, whose singleness of purpose and artistic integrity are vouched for even by his enemies, refused to enter the race for profit. Believing "the circulation of poetry a spiritual, or, at the least, an artistic, rather than an economic enterprise", he needed no additional, practical assurances that the venture would be financially sound. Such devotion to an ideal resulted in his being, throughout most of his life, referred to as "poor Harold" by those who were better able to cope with the world of affairs.

He was practical enough, however, to recognize the extreme desirability of joining the forces of his *Poetry Review* and his shop, using the former to "recommend the public what to read" and the latter to "sell them what we have recommended". To accomplish the physical juncture, Monro leased, in the name of *The Poetry Review,* an eighteenth-century house which was large enough to serve as the shop, as the office of the *Review,* as a lecture hall, and as a kind of literary boarding house whose rooms were "let at a moderate rate to those in sympathy with our aims, who are temporarily in London, and care to avail themselves of our hospitality." As might have been expected, kind-hearted Monro soon turned the rooms over to indigent poets who remained until their fortunes improved or until they could stomach no longer the unsavoury neighbourhood in which their quarters were situated. The father of Imagism, T. E. Hulme, took advantage of the free bed-sitting rooms above the shop, and delivered one of the "Poetry Review Lectures" in payment, perhaps, of his debt. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson and Wilfred Owen also made Monro's building their headquarters in the pre-war years.

Even before the bookshop could hold its formal opening celebration, however, a long series of clashes between Monro, as editor of *The Poetry Review,* and his backers in the venture, The Poetry Society, culminated in Monro's dismissal from the magazine. Immediately, he entered into competition with his former employers by establishing his own periodical, *Poetry and Drama,* and by linking closely the activities of his shop and his new magazine.

The press was in general hostile to the new shop. Stephen Phillips, who had replaced Monro as editor of *The Poetry Review*, summed up the attitude of the conservative journals: "When the novelty of the venture has ceased to interest and amuse, we are afraid that the recently opened poetry bookshop will fail to attract our callous London, which will never appreciate an exclusive 'poetry' shop."

If the criticisms which attended the opening of the shop are justified, then Monro was defeating his own purpose—to have poetry considered

"in relation to life." To get as close to the people as possible, he had chosen to place his shop in the slums, but, according to F. S. Flint, "the people cared nothing for his poetry, and . . . regarded him as a possible source of free drinks." Once more idealism had apparently come off second-best in a practical world. The wonder was that the shop was able to function for as many years as it did.

Although the lay public may have been little impressed by the bookshop, it attracted the poets, especially the younger group, in great numbers. Most of them came in the hope of meeting the right people, for they realized, with John Gould Fletcher, that the "path to literary success in London, as elsewhere, lay less in merit than in cleverly handled contacts with the dominant figures of the day." In Monro, his shop and his periodical, they sensed the answer to their problem of gaining entré to the charmed circle. Even Ezra Pound acknowledged Monro's gift of organization and publicity, and was careful to divide his time between Ford Madox Ford, whose *English Review* was still an influence in poetry, and Monro, whose stock as a literary leader was on the rise.

Not one to compromise when the subject was poetry, Monro often appeared unfriendly to the young hopefuls who browsed among his books—looking eagerly at the special shelf "reserved for the most recent poetry." Thus John Gould Fletcher, fresh from Arkansas and bewildered in the maze of British literary politics, reported:

> "I still made desperate efforts to penetrate within, frequenting Harold Monro's recently opened Poetry Bookshop, despite Monro's iron gruffness and lack of cordiality, and speculating endlessly on whether I could really seek admission into some of London's exclusively literary clubs . . . I even sent Monro a laudatory sonnet, entitled 'The Bookshop in the Slum', in order . . . through flattery . . . to enkindle somehow his interest . . . only to receive in reply a vaguely noncommittal note that was even more deadly than a flat refusal."

Another young hopeful got the same impression. Gerald Cumberland admits sheepishly that "he received me rather heavily at his office . . . read some of my verses, and told me quite frankly that he did not consider me much of a poet". Robert Frost's young friend, Edward Thomas, met with the same rebuff. "I am anxious to know", he wrote to Monro, "whether anyone really likes them (his verses) or some one of them." Monro rejected them and sent them back to the poet. Monro's conscientious nature and his love of literature made him a strict, demanding critic. What fell short of the stringent standards which he established was discarded, no matter how well recommended; what met his requirements, no matter how conventional or bizarre, was accepted and published with boyish enthusiasm.

Certainly he did not hesitate to change his mind when he felt that he

had made a mistake. Thus he accepted the poems of Thomas a short time later, and he thumped the drum for Fletcher as part of his contribution to the Imagist movement. His pronouncements may not have been completely accurate, but all of the tweed-clad country poets and many of the sophisticated city-bred writers longed for a word of encouragement from the man who was responsible in large measure for shaping the taste of the time in poetry.

Some poets and laymen came to the shop for still another reason. They were drawn by the poetry readings which had been organized to allow poets to display their wares to best advantage and lovers of poetry to hear it from the author himself, with no slight flavour lost through misinterpretation. In June, 1913, it was announced that poetry readings would be held twice a week at the shop, and that among the readers would be W. B. Yeats, Ernest Rhys, Harold Monro, and Francis Meynell. There was to be no charge for the first "trial" reading. Admission was to be by card. The room in which the meetings were held is described by Edward Marsh as "a kind of loft which looked as if it was meant to keep apples in, and one ought to get into it by a ladder through a trap door. It was illuminated by a single night light, which I thought at first must be a Futurist tenet; but it turned out to be only a fatuity of Monro's . . ." and again by a journalist of *The London Mercury* as a "candle-lit barn at the back of the house". Atmosphere was the watchword. To preserve it, even during the hot summer months the shades were kept tightly drawn, the curtains were heavy and dark, the room illuminated by lighted candles. To an American of Amy Lowell's vitality and practicality, it was an atmosphere of "overwhelming sentimentality" which seemed not at all disturbing or incongruous to young country poets with long hair and flowing neckties who assumed airs and read poetry.

The roster of readers and listeners is long and impressive, including almost everybody who was anybody in the field of poetry just before the first World War. Ernest Rhys, the critic and editor of the older generation, was one of the staunchest supporters of the recitations. Rupert Brooke, probably through his friend and Monro's colleague, Marsh, gave readings of his poems. Monro himself and Alida Klementaski, whom he married in 1920, interpreted aloud the new poetry in their peculiar way. In the audience sat Frost, his Yankee mind open to the new, cosmopolitan influences about him. Pound listened and, no doubt, chafed visibly when all the attention of the group was centred on another speaker. Marsh, secretary to prime ministers and friend of letters, was present on the night that the Italian Marinetti startled his British audience in the course of his lecture on Futurism, delivered vehemently with much waving of the hands. Perhaps the late Satanist, Aleister Crowley, put in an appearance. Monro had inexplicably taken a liking to this man whom Marsh calls a

"baleful apparition, in conjuror's evening dress (who) talked wittily, cruelly, and diabolically," causing the wholesome country poets to feel that they "had been in the presence of Evil with a capital E". Amy Lowell, whose talent for organization equalled that of Monro, paid her respects, and ran true to form by interrupting Rupert Brooke's reading three separate times to shout "Louder". At the second poetry reading, with the audience sufficiently softened by the atmosphere and the verses, Monro attempted to boost his sagging finances by asking those who attended to subscribe to his *Poetry and Drama*.

Poetry recitals attract an audience which is, under ordinary circumstances, composed of those people who have a professional interest in poetry, as poets or critics, or those to whom poetry gives pleasure. It was to be expected that Monro's project would appeal to such people although it did not bring joy to the hearts of his neighbours in the Bloomsbury slum. Rather, Alfred Noyes is quoted as saying, it earned the "contempt of the man in the street for all poetry". They did succeed however, in giving confidence to the young and untried poets who lacked the polish and poise to feel at home in the presence of the self-assured Yeats or the worldly Marsh.

To widen still further the sphere of influence of his shop and his magazine, Monro accepted invitations to lecture throughout England on the state of modern poetry. A few months before, he had sponsored, in the name of *The Poetry Review*, a series of lectures, the first of which was delivered by the Irish patriot, Darrell Figgis. *The Poetry Review* reported a large attendance. Monro selected T. E. Hulme to give the next lecture, a lecture on "The new philosophy of art as illustrated in poetry". For undisclosed but obvious reasons, the Hulme lecture was offered to the public at half price, one shilling instead of two, and that was made the standard price for subsequent lectures.

Lectures and readings, no matter how brilliant and well-intended, can reach only a tiny portion of the public directly. Realizing this, Monro sought other means to prove that "modern English poetry was very good". But it remained for chance to provide the key to international fame—even notoriety—for the bookshop and for the people who ran it.

The Georgian poetry anthologies, the first of which was published by the newly organized Poetry Bookshop in December, 1912, were the result of a chance conversation between Marsh and Rupert Brooke. In Marsh's words, "Rupert announced one evening, sitting half-undressed on his bed, that he had conceived a brilliant scheme. He would write a book of poetry, and publish it as a selection from the works of twelve writers . . . all with the most convincing pseudonyms . . ." That was on September 19th, 1912. At noon the next day, Marsh held an informal luncheon in his flat for Wilfrid Gibson, John Drinkwater, Rupert Brooke, Harold

Monro, and Monro's sub-editor, Arundell del Re. Brooke's facetious suggestion was examined and discarded; but from the discussion emerged a serious plan whose origin must be credited to Marsh who was shrewd enough to see the possibilities for its execution in Monro's bookshop.

The Poetry Bookshop, it was decided, would publish a new kind of anthology "of poems drawn entirely from publications of 1911 and 1912". In this way the planners hoped that good but neglected modern verse might get a hearing. There was, Monro emphatically insists, "no smallest intention of founding a school, or of tracing a course for poetry to follow." Among the writers selected for inclusion were Lascelles Abercrombie, Gordon Bottomley, Rupert Brooke, G. K. Chesterton, Walter de la Mare, W. H. Davies, Wilfrid Gibson, D. H. Lawrence, John Masefield, and Harold Monro. The men who planned the book argued constantly over what should be excluded. Had it not been for the force and the disinterested devotion to poetry which Monro showed, the whole project might have ended in chaos. Luckily, it didn't.

Considering that poetry was out of fashion, that most of the names in Marsh's anthology were relatively unknown, and that it was published with little ballyhoo from its sponsors, it was almost unbelievably successful. To the astonishment of the group in the bookshop, *Georgian Poetry, 1911–12* sold fifteen thousand copies, and the demand was still unabated. The poets fortunate enough to have been included were delighted. Walter de la Mare immediately penned a poem to Marsh expressing boyish satisfaction with the profits from its publication and sale. To the hard-pressed Poetry Bookshop went half the profits; the equally needy contributors divided the other half. So effective a propaganda weapon for the New Poetry could not be lightly abandoned, and five additional Georgian anthologies appeared in the next thirteen years. But it was the first, the work of Marsh and Monro, which seems to have roused the poetry world from its torpor and to have set in motion, unwittingly to be sure, strenuous movements and countermovements. Ezra Pound quickly set to work to bring out "an anthology that would serve as a counterblast to Harold Monro's *Georgian Poetry*". Indirectly, then, the formal publications of the Imagists were a reaction against the poetry of the country, and it is just another indication of the speedy turn of events at that time that Monro himself, "after a good deal of hesitation and misgiving," should have published the London edition of *Des Imagistes*, a short time later, at the Poetry Bookshop.

The reception of the Georgian volume was mild compared with that accorded *Des Imagistes*. People unaccustomed to the sharp, unblurred images and the brittle phrases of Pound's school were not sure what tack to adopt. Reported Richard Aldington: "One copy was angrily returned from the Savoy Hotel by an American, and an old gentleman came into

the shop and made a row." The newspapers, with the surprising exception of the staid *Morning Post*, howled epithets in chorus. Even Monro's Georgian fledglings were hard put to it to conceal their displeasure. But he stuck by his literary guns, determined to discover good poetry and to present it unashamedly whenever and wherever he found it. From the Poetry Bookshop came such books as Richard Aldington's *Images, Old and New*, Ford Madox Ford's *Antwerp*, Charlotte Mew's *The Farmer's Bride*, and Anna Wickham's *The Contemplative Quarry*.

On the merits of the books it published alone might well rest the reputation of the Poetry Bookshop. They were fresh, provocative, usually of literary value, always controversial. And poetry appears to have thrived on controversy during the first two decades of this century. Had there been no *Georgian Poetry, 1911–12*, the battle lines between the old and the new, the pleasant and the startling, might not have been clearly drawn. But for Monro and his shop, there is reason to speculate whether there would have been an Imagist *school*, or whether that other "counterblast to *Georgian Poetry* called *Wheels*" would have come to raging life, under the Sitwells, as the vehicle of expression for those poets who had not made Marsh's collection. Through its publications, the shop gained an international reputation; yet it did not make enough money to cover the expenses of running it.*

It was a success, according to F. S. Flint, "but not a commercial success". Not one penny of profit came to Monro from the shop or from the publishing business. Pound blames Monro's financial failure on the fact that he "intrigued not at all. He sold nobody's books in his shop with enough vigour or partiality to make friends . . ." Conversely, he chose to be independent and high-handed on questions of principle. Thus he insisted that "justice be done to . . . the better element among writers", and he refused to compromise with his original intention to sell only poetry in his shop. When going along with the literary crowd would have meant relative prosperity, he would not "adopt a fashion for the sake of adopting a fashion".

In the present time of comparative plenty for the little magazines, Harold Monro, his reviews, and his Bookshop deserve honour for their pioneering efforts in the lean years.

* By an odd coincidence a work of a Vice-President of the Poetry Society, *Fables* by Sir Ronald Ross, was the last book sold by the Poetry Bookshop when it closed its doors for the last time on the night of June 28th, 1935:—Editor.

CANADA'S WAR POET

THE WRITINGS OF BERTRAM WARR

BY G. S. FRASER

1: Background

The first time I read of Bertram Warr was when I noticed John Gawsworth's obituary of him which I saw in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 7th August, 1943. Here it is:

"I have been informed through a member of his family that the loss of Bertram Warr, at the age of twenty-five, on air operations, has been confirmed. It was my good fortune to be stationed for several months with this young but intellectually mature Canadian poet, the while he qualified as an air observer. Frail in appearance, a very "parfait gentil" serious young man, it was difficult to imagine the self-chosen vicissitudes he had endured: hitch-hiking across Canada, stowing away one Christmas Eve and landing in Liverpool with but £1 in his pocket, to starve at times, wash dishes, and clerk in Billingsgate, solely because he desired to add to the literature of the Mother Country. His modesty would have it that it was but a mite he had to offer. Alas, that we will never now know the full sum!

"Nevertheless, he has his place and it is right and fitting that he should have found it under English imprints. A broadsheet of some dozen poems in the Favil Press Series of Resurgam Younger Poets (with a prose preface that clearly states his individual poetic principle), a few uncollected poems in Mr. Wrey Gardiner's *Poetry Quarterly*, and representation in "Poems of the Forces" and Miss Patricia Ledward's Cambridge University Press anthology of war-time verse: such are his published beginnings. After the war I sincerely hope it may be possible to issue a volume concurrently in England and Canada, selected from the above and from his assembled manuscripts."

And now I have been looking at an early notebook of Warr's. It contains both literary material, which I will deal with in the next section of this essay, and some drafts of letters which his friend Gawsworth has added. These latter give a clue to background: an emptiness, a lack of complication and thickness in the Canadian atmosphere, against which Warr's feelings detach themselves with a strong, clumsy pathos. The letters have a slow, awkward sincerity that was typical of him at home, and would remain so abroad. There are also one or two private notes, which reflect

his early intellectual struggles. Warr was brought up as a Roman Catholic. He went through a period of religious scepticism, and became what he called a Socialist—but, against his particular background, his becoming a Socialist, like his becoming a poet, like his questioning of the value of outward success, was an act of almost *solitary* inner protest. What he was reacting against was less something resistant in the outer world than something imprinted by the Canadian tradition on his own character. On the moral level, that tradition is puritan; to the last, there was a great deal of the puritan in Warr himself, one of his strengths as a writer was the ability to express anger, contempt, disgust in a forceful way, one of his weaknesses was a suspicion of all airs and graces. On a practical level, the tradition was commercial. It was the job of a young man to get ahead and to stand on his own feet. Warr accepted that. He wrote: "Not that I intend to haughtily spurn"—(to the last he would be liable to split an infinitive, to use such a sequence as "not so much . . . but rather", to write "commence" instead of "begin")—"any money my writings may bring me; on the contrary, it will be most necessary to write commercially".

So, not reacting outwardly, he had to fight his early battles inside himself. He read a little philosophy. "It seems to be Plato's holding that our souls, being immortal, have always existed. This is evident from the statement that all things possessing immortality are uncreated. The Christian belief is that our souls are created *into* immortality?" But on the same page of the notebook as this idealistic argument against Christian belief, there is the more common materialistic one: "Science does disprove the Bible. Bulwark of Christianity shattered". It is doubtful whether it was ever quite finally shattered for Warr himself. His Socialism was essentially that of a man who wants to see Christian principles taken seriously and stringently applied. It was based on moral rather than practical considerations. "It cannot be said," he remarked once, with very surprising acuteness, "of Democracy or Fascism or Socialism or any other of the -isms that they will not work." The real question was at what moral level a system would work. "In order to function, however," he noted, "Christian Socialism requires the complete subjugation of self in its administrators. Greed must be stamped out of the heart. If men were not men, but something higher and finer, then the theory would perhaps be feasible." The duty of a Socialist poet therefore, for Warr, was to make men higher and finer, to "preach the doctrine of service". Escapist poets, he said, "bring a touch of beauty into our lives and make us for a while forget the misery of thousands. But they do nothing to remedy the poverty and disease that is our scourge. What hungry man can enjoy a pretty poem when his child cries for food?" His moral claim for even his own kind of poetry, if it was firm, was modest: "Poetry is useful as aid to success in keeping a warm heart and open mind."

Thus Warr was an awkward customer. He spent the creative part of

his short life asking himself and others these bald, tactless questions. Tortured by good-will, he lacked the smooth, accommodating temperament that eases a young writer forward and the ability to abstract oneself, to forget everything for the time being but the "pretty poem", that enables him to produce a finished work of art. Most of the verses that he has left us are, quite literally, "poetical sketches". There are powerful strokes in nearly all of them but nearly all of them need more working up. His prose is often more steadily sure of itself; but even there, he is liable at any moment to sacrifice an imaginative coherence to the demands of an improving rhetoric. He is too eager to catch the reader by the shoulder and look him in the eye; his intimacies can be rasping. His writings must be taken more as evidence of what he might have done than as a rounded achievement. There can be no doubt about his natural gift and no doubt, either, that he did not make the most of it. Morally, he perhaps made the most of himself. His writings are evidence not only of what he might have done but of what he was: a young man quite unusually brave, generous, honourable, and anguished.

2: Theories About Poetry

Warr was not, however, just a fine, open-hearted young man. He had an unusually penetrating mind. In that early notebook, there is a passage that, when I first read it, startled me.

> "I am unable to apply myself with any amount of concentration to learning. My attempts to absorb and follow the clear reasoning of my teachers are disrupted by a stream of pettiness—the idleness of emotional activity. Either success without suffering is my aim, or I am by nature incapable of attaining the necessary position of invulnerability to pleasure from which action results. It is not so much the urge to create for art's sake which motivates me but rather the desire for success, recognition, and the accompanying honours. This, of course, is very human but my desire is to become impervious to economic success, however sweet . . . What is it that the world sees in the artist that inspires worship? The inherent or developed ability to portray those things which affect the sensuous nature of man is the power of the artist."

This passage shows a raw adolescent, in a new country, making, quite on his own, three important discoveries about poetry.

First, there is Freud's discovery that the poet is moved by a deep desire for "success, recognition, and the accompanying honours". Young poets have seldom the courage to admit this or the penetration to find it out; comparing their own kind of ambition with that of other people, they mistake it for a disinterested attitude.

Second, there is the discovery that poetry springs, not from concentrated practical attention, but from "idleness of emotional activity", from "vulnerability to pleasure", this is Wordsworth's insistence on the capacity of poetry to transform painful experiences into pleasurable ones, and Keats' "negative capability"—the poet's gift of *not* concentrating on practical things. It is Yeats's, "Hamlet and Lear are gay". But most young poets, since so much effective poetry is written round sad subjects and since the easiest mood for young poets themselves to exploit is a "pleasing melancholy" tend to think of the poetic mood as sad in itself.

Thirdly, Warr tells us that the power of the artist is the "ability to portray those things which affect the sensuous nature of man". The distinction he has in mind is obviously between the sensuous and intellectual natures, he is recognising, as again young poets seldom do, that the discovery of new and important abstract truths is not the business of the poet but the philosopher.

In a short paragraph, the young Warr has thus managed to rough out for himself what sort a creature a poet is and where poetry belongs on the scale of man's activities, and thus without dragging in, except by his general admission that the poet is not a person of concentrated practical intelligence, the favourite red-herring of the poet's relation to society. A poet is also a citizen, as a citizen he will from time to time have to bring his practical intelligence to bear on social problems; but in so far as he is doing that, he is ceasing to act specifically as a poet. One might say that Warr, in that passage, has solved that problem, too, by implication, and in passing.

3: *The Poet and the Puritan*

But Warr, in a sense, was almost too good a citizen. That tortured good-will of his rarely allowed him to bring all his powers to bear on the comparatively trivial task of perfecting a poem. And the poet in Warr, with his vulnerability to pleasure, had a constant battle to fight with the puritan, to whom pleasure was something to be regarded with suspicion and disgust. There are some weak but revealing lines in that early notebook, about sex.

> Lover of the mass, thou hottest secret caves
> Where lurks dark passion, votary of Sin,

and then, rather heatedly one feels, "Phooey!" written in large letters over the page. But if Warr might cease to believe that sexual pleasure was wrong, he would not be able to get rid of a suspicion that it was at least slightly nasty. He saw that poetry must be based on acceptance, but the moral tradition in which he had been brought up was one of rejection. Thus, too many of his poems—without having the zest, for instance, of satire—are depressingly negative in tone. The tough, resistant

firmness of his moral nature often acted, one cannot help feeling, as a piece of grit in his poetical machine. There were times when a weaker man with the same gifts, in Warr's circumstances, would have written stronger poetry.

And yet rejection, in one sense, was his constant poetic theme. Let me quote three passages, all of which come off, more or less, which express this mood of rejection at different levels of objective concreteness. The first passage is very subjective and abstract:

> I shall not die by my own hand, but will be killed in the war. But this being killed will be only the completion of the death. The desire to die has been with me for some months. When it came into being I do not know, but since I have been conscious of an absence of purpose in my life, I have progressed through the stages, at first of despair and then of apathy, until now I begin again with this new purpose of my life, to adjust myself to the business of dying.

The second passage is less sunk back in the self and more particularised, a piece of poetic journalism about the bombing of East End London; though even here there is a faintly hysterical "personal note":

> Let's get out of this. Look, there's a cat lurking
> In that debris. See, beside that half-buried mattress.
> Here, puss, pretty puss, here. Why, look at it go.
> Wild, and that savage eye. It's forgotten already, I guess.

The third passage is rejection made art, rejection accepted and so transformed, somehow, into something else; no longer blindly subjective, no longer hung on the spectacle of violence; but ironically purred over like a mouse, teased, tormented, loved:

> And what situation would be in the relationship between those of my household and the charming and false lady who visited us so frequently and drove us to desperation almost with her flatteries, her sweetly expressed and insincere praise for our persons, our furnishings and equipment, and our food? In each visit she found new beauties about us which called forth from her incessant and for us embarrassing verbal raptures. Finally, the dear soul, in her deep and musical Viennese tones, on the last occasion of my seeing her before I went away from it all, found nothing new to delight her, and turning her eyes to the faded paper on the walls, which we wanted to replace, but had not the money to do so, she made us quite silent by saying loudly and ingenuously:
>
> "What paper, my dears, what paper. O, how smoothly it rests upon the walls. How beautifully smooth it is."

Yet if there is a deep impulse towards rejection in Warr's writings, there is also a wistful desire to accept:

> But there are things that still matter, something yet within us:
> nights of love, bread and the kids,

and the cheek of the woman next door,
thoughts that glitter sometimes like a ruby on a mud flat,
dreams that stir, and remind us of our blood.

But it is in such passages, more than in those which express a purely negative attitude, that we are aware of Warr's lack of technical finish; of how his voice falters.

4: Craftsmanship

It is a pity about that lack of finish. There are poems of Warr's of which one cannot say more, as they stand, than that they are promising roughs; and yet one feels that, with the right things done to them, they might have a place in the canon. On some of his rough drafts, in fact, I found notes, in a hand not his own, which are extremely to the point: for instance, on the line

With the viscous seethe of wrong and *race-right-sense,*

the note, "I find this awkward after the vivid image, which demands a climax and not an abstraction." And there is a very penetrating note, by the same commentator, on the whole poem from which that line is taken: "Your 'inverted vulgarity' is very much a part of you but as with any original quality, it becomes merely tiresome if not qualified by other things. I find your verse sometimes over-intellectual in the way it pursues and worries an image."

Warr's "inverted vulgarity" was, I think, an aspect of the puritanism I have spoken of already; of his horror of the "pretty" and his rather too exclusive fancy for the tart, distasteful image (a fancy which can be very easily combined, as in such "tough" American thriller writers as Raymond Chandler, with a basic sentimentality). But his habit of worrying away at some illustration of an idea, where most English poets would make a gesture at the illustration in passing, was, I imagine, a general characteristic he shared with many North Americans; who, even in ordinary conversation, have a tendency to make points at what seems to ourselves unnecessary length and to illustrate every general idea by means of one or two anecdotes. Because our own minds move at a different tempo, this often strikes us as evidence of a kind of stupidity in North Americans; but it may be also evidence of a more close and sensitive relation between feelings and ideas than is common among ourselves. We, for our part, to many Americans, seem insincere and glib.

On another poem (one about sexual experience), there is the apt comment, in the same hand, that such negative reactions must be counterpointed with something positive, or there is nothing to make a poem out of. This is the point I have been making abundantly already, about Warr's puritanism. Too often where the topical detail or the subjective feeling in one of his poems is ugly, it elicits merely a retractive movement,

a sore, sensitive withdrawal, without any corresponding pleasurable expansion. Yet there is one of his poems, wholly free both of the topical and the subjective elements, which is, perhaps, perfect. The subject is the death of an elephant:

> Sunset when the eyes suddenly closed
> And the huge flesh moved on the hooks of instinct.
> Birth of the night and the end.
> With the insensitive majesty of the immense,
> Flowing on over the land, pitiless as flood,
> Submissive, too, as water.
>
> To the valley of the transformation;
> With moonrise, a low dubious sound,
> Farewell or a looking forward.
> Then the slow surrender-sinking to the ground.
> And after a time the green grows through and around
> And is no longer shy with the unconquered ivory.

I say this is *perhaps* a perfect poem. There is a comment on it, in the same hand as these others: "I only dislike the first line for the heavy emphasis and the over-romantic colouring here." The heavy emphasis, the two substitutions of trochee for iambus, "sunset," "sudden-": is it not after all appropriate to the great beast's sinking down? And the "romantic colouring", the hint of pathetic fallacy in the connection of the setting of the sun with the closing of the eyes of the elephant? Is it not really quite in place, after all, and might an elephant not wait till dark till it decided to let itself die? The comment, on the whole, strikes me as hypercritical; and my own slight worry about the hyphenated "surrender-sinking" is probably hypercritical, too. Perfect or not, this is at least a much better poem than many contemporaries of Warr's have written, who have made more noise in the world than he. The poem is not typical, unfortunately, but it shows what Warr might have achieved if he had been spared.

5: Assessment

Much of Bertram Warr's work, as I have already indicated, is at a sort of promising notebook stage. It is working along towards where it ought to be; and it will never get there now. The judgment that has to be made on him is not on his achievement but on his potentialities and his character. His character seems to have been inherently noble and lovable, but sometimes rather painfully turned in on itself, first by an early background which in some ways constricted though in other ways it gave strength, and secondly by a deep horror—that of a conscience with no hard protective layers—at the violence, cruelty, disorder of the modern world; at

the same time, that puritan stiffness and that sense of unforgivable outrage, if in some ways they cripple Warr's work, do also contribute toward its peculiarly individual flavour. There is patience, muscle, and a slight sense of straining with intractable material about everything he wrote; no gesture with words, no expression of any feeling at all, came easy to him: but if this makes him often seem awkward and naive, it also means that nothing he wrote was merely conventional, that he has left us no exercises in common literary form.

The main impression that Warr's verse does leave on the memory is of strength, naturally rather clumsy, but patiently disciplining itself towards a proper skill: of that, and of a sometimes painful raw sincerity. Guessing about what the dead might have done is a futile game. But Warr seems to me to have a temperamental affinity with another poet killed in the late war, who has left us, perhaps, a more definitely assessable achievement: Keith Douglas. Neither was a literary, or a speculative, or a sentimental poet. Both have a hardness and a stringency which attracts some readers as much as it repels others. Both were brave, active, and generous men, wholly, by the ordinary standards of human virtue, admirable. Of Warr it is true, as of Douglas it is not, that when he died he had still much of his art to learn. But he was a younger man, who had enjoyed none of Douglas's advantages; and I think, if he had lived and if he had learned to get both his own pain and the pain of the world into a proper perspective, he might be giving younger poets in this country a lead they sadly lack.

THE BOUQUET AND THE BURNING BUSH

Selected Lyrics of Heine, translated by Humbert Wolfe (The Bodley Head, 7s. 6d.)
The Collected Poems of Isaac Rosenberg (Chatto and Windus, 10s. 6d.)

REVIEWED BY P. D. CUMMINS

In 1897, a hundred years after the birth of Heinrich Heine in Dusseldorf, a small boy of seven left Bristol with his family, and became a pupil at an elementary school in Stepney. Born to poverty, physically handicapped, unable to the end of his life to find verbal expression for his thoughts, Isaac Rosenberg was yet to become a poet whose work contains the richness, the beauty and the colour that he himself was denied, a poet whose vision was greater than that of his far more celebrated co-religionist, Heine. For Heine, the expedient convert, the Jew by accident

of birth alone, to whom so much was given, has bequeathed us a glittering bouquet, but Rosenberg, the Jew by passionate conviction, from whom almost all was taken, has vouchsafed us glimpses of the Burning Bush.

Strait is the gate. The very fact that Heine, in the worldly sense, was the Fortunate Youth, undoubtedly restricted his genius; it was all too easy for him to gather his lilies and roses and arrange them with a beautifully-calculated simplicity; he had all too much leisure in which to indulge in a shallow cynicism, a facile despair. Humbert Wolfe, Heine's closest interpreter, has likened him to A. E. Housman, but the resemblance is superficial. Heine lacks the tautness, the strength which Housman achieved through impersonality; the "I" of the Shropshire Lad is the "I" of Everyman, but the "I" of Heine's lyrics is entirely ego. It is because of this that his sentiment so often lapses into sentimentality, and for all the grace and charm of his work, for all that it provides an easy outlet for the emotions, it is difficult to understand why he occupies so high a pedestal amongst poets. The truth is, of course, that Heine, for all his failings, was a phenomenon, a solitary cultivator of flowers, the only function of which was to be ornamental, in the midst of a nation earnestly engaged in the raising of highly nutritious and useful, if unattractive, vegetables. To put it more plainly, ask almost anyone to name the great German poets up to, say, 1860, and you will be answered at top speed: "Schiller, Goethe, Heine . . . (pause) . . . and . . . there *are* others, of course, there must be others, but . . . but who the devil are they?" Schiller, Goethe, Heine, then, and of these three, Heine alone is the purely romantic lyricist, the singer for the sake of the song, the poet of love on the sensual plane. Heine's, therefore, is a unique contribution to the literature of the German-speaking peoples, and so to the literature of the world, and it is fitting that his bouquet, so curiously out of place amongst the prize marrows and giant pumpkins, should have remained unwilted by the touch of time. Many attempts have been made to distil the essence of Heine's flowers, too often with dismal results; even Humbert Wolfe, closely attuned to him as he was, was guilty of translating the first verse of the "Lorelei" as:

"O why am I beholden,
My heart, to understand,
Thy sorrow to some olden
Gossip of fairy-land"

which is bad enough, and of rendering "Ich grolle nicht" as "I grumble not", which is worse. Nor was Wolfe always exact. Compare these two stanzas describing the water-lily:

"Verschämt senkt sie das Köpfchen
Wieder hinab zu den Wellen —
Da sieht sie zu Ihren Füssen

Den armen blassen Geselln."
"Sweetly alarmed she trembles
back to the water, while
She sees beneath reflected
the cold Da Vinci smile."

"Cold Da Vinci smile" is delightful, but it is not Heine. However, it is ungrateful to pounce on the errors into which Wolfe was betrayed when so much of his work is brilliantly successful. Here is a perfectly interpreted lyric:

"The rose and the lily, the dove and Apollo,
I loved them all once but I found they were shallow,
And now my sole love is (I tell them all plainly)
The little, the brittle, the lonely, the only.
For she is the source and the spring in the hollow
Of the rose and the lily, the dove and Apollo."

Roses and lilies, cooing doves and sunlight—these could have been scarcely more than dreams to Isaac Rosenberg in the noisy, crowded streets of Stepney. As a small child he had begun to scribble verses, but it was an artist that he wanted to be, and on leaving school at fourteen, he became an apprentice-engraver to a firm of "art" publishers. In the evening, he went to drawing and painting classes, and whenever he had any free time, he would go to the National Gallery and earnestly attempt to "copy" a masterpiece. On one occasion, Queen Mary paused by his easel, but he was too absorbed in what he was doing to notice her. This little incident was noticed with amusement by another artist, Lily Delissa Joseph (sister of Solomon J. Solomon, R.A.); it was she who, knowing of his poverty and of his burning desire to paint, decided to help him. Accordingly, she, Mrs. E. D. Lowy (mother of Mrs. Victor Gollancz to whom I am indebted for the description and for certain biographical details of Rosenberg), and Mrs. Herbert Cohen provided the means for his training at the Slade.

Rosenberg, however, was never to express himself adequately in paint; the rich, vivid colours for which he sought eluded him, and his brush would only produce dull, muddy, lifeless hues. It was in the written word that the shy, awkward, almost inarticulate boy found the true outlet for his genius—a genius that is all the more remarkable in the light of his physical make-up, his background, his few rags of education. Through Rosenberg the word was most certainly made flesh.

Although many writers and critics were aware of Rosenberg's gifts, it was not until 1922, four years after his death, that Gordon Bottomley persuaded Heinemann to bring out a book of his poems, a book for which Laurence Binyon wrote the foreword. It has taken another twenty-eight years for his *Collected Poems* to appear, and while the inclusion of certain

juvenilia does Rosenberg a disservice, discriminating readers will ask themselves why this beautiful and outstanding poet has been allowed to remain so long neglected—or at best, half remembered. Siegfried Sassoon in his prefatory note is right when he pays tribute to Rosenberg's integrity, when he describes him as "scriptural and sculptural", when he senses behind all his work a "racial quality: biblical and prophetic". Most certainly he was a visionary poet, consciously or unconsciously aware—probably the latter—of the terrible, yet wonderful burden that he who is inspired from within can never lay down, and which will isolate him for all the days of his life. Here, for instance, is the opening of the Argument to "Night and Day"; the long poem written in 1912:

> "*Night.* The Poet wanders through the night and questions
> the stars, but receives no answer. He walks through
> the crowds and asks himself whether he is the scapegoat
> to bear the sins of humanity upon himself, and to waste
> his life to discover the secret of God for all . . ."

Yet he is compensated because:

> "Last night I stripped my soul of all alloy
> Of earth that did ensphere and fetter it.
> I strove to touch the springs of all the night.
> My brow felt spray, but hands and eyes were dry.
> Last night my soul thought God—my soul felt God.
> I prayed the stars this for my body's dole.
> Through prayer and thought to purified desires.
> Through hallowed thought I was made half divine."

Thus Rosenberg at 23. "Night and Day" is a miraculous poem, as miraculous as Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" to which, it is the equal in ecstasy. In all his work the spirit flowers; to this undersized, weakly, pathetically unattractive Jewish boy the tongue of angels was given, he was empowered, to quote Mr. Sassoon once more, with "something of the divine spirit which touches our human clay to sublimity of expression."

In 1914, Rosenberg was told that his lungs were affected, and went to live with a sister in South Africa. He returned to England in 1915, and enlisted, although how he came to be passed as fit is incomprehensible. He was sent to France, and was probably engaged in some non-combatant work behind the lines when he was killed in April, 1918.

We have been through a second world-war since then; we may be standing on the brink of another. The apocalyptic vision has been displaced by the atom bomb. Death could drop on us at any moment from the dark, a more dreadful form of death than Rosenberg envisaged when he wrote:

> "Sombre the night is,
> And though we have our lives, we know

What sinister threat lurks there . . .
But hark! Joy — joy — strange joy,
Lo! heights of night ringing with larks.
Music showering on our upturned list'ning faces.
Death could drop from the dark
As easily as song . . .

More easily, for only the voices of the singers, the visionaries, can save the world from destruction, and how many of us have ceased to listen to them—say, rather, are no longer able to listen to them.

SCHOLARSHIP AND THE CLOISTER

The Pursuit of Diarmuid and Graunia by John Redwood Anderson (O.U.P. 10s. 6d.)

Sonnets of Louise Labé translated into English Verse by Alta Lind Cook (University of Toronto Press, 2 dollars, 25 cents; London, Geoffrey Cumberlege, 17s.)

Charnwood Psalter by Bruno Walker, O.C.R. (Mount Saint Bernard Abbey, Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire)

REVIEWED BY E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

Two of these books are obviously written by scholars: the third is obviously a Christian sincerity. They have nothing in common except sincerity; their writers mean what they say.

In appraising Mr. Redwood Anderson's retelling of Irish legendary matter in blank verse with unrhymed lyric interpolations I must disclaim any knowledge of his originals; I can judge it only as English poetry, furnished with learned and often illuminating notes. He has chosen a Tristram-like legend, unheroic in essentials, in which the lovers appear as the victims of a power beyond themselves, though there is no potion, but "bonds of death and destruction". The king forgives the man who has seduced the lady he was sent to fetch, on their first child's account; then, after a happy existence, the fate-driven Diarmuid loses his life in a boar hunt (rather tame after that of Calydon) and Graunia goes to Finn, as originally intended. The effect is not in the least like Yeats, but a sort of Fiona-Macleoding of one of the *Idylls of the King*, with James Macpherson taking the pipes between the episodes, as here in the first song of "The Harpers in the Wind":

Who is it comes from the land of Promise? the Land
of the Dead? the Land of the Ever-Young? Before her

the white mist moves on the moor like a tranquil surf,
like the spreading fringe of a wave on the summer sands (1950)

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the West? Whose voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of Carryl? It is my love in the light of steel; but sad is his darkened brow. Live the mighty race of Fingal? or what disturbs my Connal? (1760)

The pursuit is clearly told and the frequent Irish proper names generally manage to steer clear of *Jabberwocky* effects such as

But the Ga Bwee glanced from the bristled hide
and pierced the ground behind him. (Book Six)

Phrases like "the opal laughter of moon-shadowed streams" give a ninety-ish flavour here and there. The most moving moment comes in Book Five with Osgar's interposition, whereby Finn spares the lovers, with its motto theme

Not for man's sake
is love; but, rather, for love's sake is man.

The blanks are varied by hemistiches and quasi-hemistiches, and nine syllable lines with end without pauses.

The sonnets of Louise Labé of Lyons, a Renaissance bluestocking, published in 1555, survive, and rightly, because they speak from the heart to the heart. They have always appealed to literary minds, and Rilke translated them into German in 1917. I have not examined Frederic Prokosch's English version (New York, 1947); I prefer to judge Alta Lind Cook's on its own merits. She prints the original opposite the translation in each case, and it is clear that her anxiety is to render as exactly as possible and in the original metre. I have nothing but sympathy for this kind of translation, indeed it seems to me to be the only one; any other kind (except a bare prose rendering) must be a free fantasia on the original. In such an attempt one hit atones for any amount of misses and in the famous twentieth sonnet, in which (like Shakespeare in "Two loves have I of comfort and despair") the French poetess reveals the core of her passion, the intensity is preserved in the scholarly exactitude. This is fine work. The last line of the sixth, *Qu'en peu de temps feray grande conqueste* is missed by rendering "That I shall make a conquest very soon", because it is the contrast between *peu* and *grande* that lifts the sentiment into poetry. Again in the two penultimate lines of the seventeenth sonnet "That if I would be free for this conversion, I must be someone else, some other person", the last three words kill the effect; "That if from thee I wish complete relief, I must fain beyond myself to live" might be just a little better. These are the first four lines of the twentieth sonnet:

It was foretold I should adore one day
The one whose features were described to me,

And with no other picture, instantly
I recognized him when he crossed my way.

This book should be bought.

In eleven sonnets, two rhymed, and three rhymeless pieces, Mr. Bruno Walker, O.C.R., has expressed what Mount Saint Bernard Abbey, in Charnwood Forest, means to him. Presumably his work is addressed to non-Christians, since he explains that "Benedicite" is a canticle calling upon all creatures to praise God and that its final e is pronounced. The sincerity and the pounding dogmatism of his lines will not be strange to lovers of Hopkins, but lovers of religious art may not take kindly the allusion to Our Lord's "Calvary trek" in his ninth sonnet. As for his addressing the Saviour as "You" and his inviting God to remember how His millstones grind, and his figure of Redemption hiding behind a wall others may like them better than I do. The three penultimate pieces seem to belong to a sequence on the months.

How small a solitude, and yet how strained
With mystery!

is the burden of this brochure; a mighty rushing wind, perhaps, but no still small voice.

SHORT REVIEWS

The Pleasures of Pope. Selected and Introduced by Peter Quennell (Hamish Hamilton, 15s.)

Poems by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 2 vols. (Everyman Library) Dent, 9s.

William Wordsworth. An Introduction and Selection by Norman Nicholson (Phoenix House, 8s. 6d.)

Songs and Lyrics from the English Masques and Light Operas edited by F. S. Boas (Harrop, 8s. 6d.)

The Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt edited by Kenneth Muir (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.)

Formal Spring. French Renaissance Poems with translations by R. N. Currey (Oxford, 10s. 6d.)

Poems of John Clare's Madness edited by Geoffrey Grigson (Routledge, 21s.)

Thor with Angels by Christopher Fry (Oxford, 5s.)

Mr. Quennell's selection is altogether admirable. He is a convinced admirer of his splendid poet, and in a reasoned introduction defends him from the charges of Romantic critics: "the sceptic of poetry" etc. He has no difficulty in showing that Pope could command the immediate richness of Romantic diction, as in the astonishing passage from the Fourth Book of the Dunciad:

. . . To lands of singing or of dancing slaves,
Love-whispering woods and lute-resounding waves . . .

and he notes the historical appositeness of

Where, *eased* of fleets, the Adriatic main . . .

This selection should convince waverers that Pope is indeed a great poet, who, although working almost entirely in the medium of the heroic couplet, uses this narrow instrument in all kinds of ways: crisply in the *Moral Essays*; majestically in some of the *Satires*, in yet another manner in the high Baroque *Eloisa to Abelard*, with its "ardours and langours". Additionally, *The Pleasures* is a comely production, in large type.

The two volume edition of Tennyson is not complete: it includes the early Prize Poem *Timbuctoo*, but not *The Hesperides*, or other poems omitted in collections issued during Tennyson's life-time. Only one song is inserted from the Plays. The selection from Wordsworth is made by a fellow Cumbrian. Mr. Nicholson insists with rigour that Wordsworth wrote hardly anything worthwhile after 1807. so that one admirable poem, at least, which he omits, is the *Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg* (1835): actually of course Wordsworth wrote quite a proportion of good work after 1807. Another omission is *Laodarnia*. But Mr. Nicholson atones for this by including the last hundred or so lines of *The Recluse*, a poem which is less well known than it deserves to be.

The Masque and the Light Opera are, I suppose, both special manifestations: the Masque was expressive of the cultured court of Elizabethan and the earlier Stuarts; the Light Opera of the not so cultured taste of the Middle Classes of the 18th and 19th Centuries. None the less they are not altogether composed bedfellows; although there is some community between the drinking songs of Jacobean entertainments and Augustan praises of the bottle. A shadowy remembrance of the 17th century love-lyric lingers as late as the elder Charles Dibdin (1787):

When on Cleora's form. I gaze,
Surveying that exhaustless store,
Till then unnoticed charms I praise,
And those till then praised I adore.
And while I look with fond surprise
And catch soft madness from my fair,
I wish for Argos' hundred eyes,
And wish to gaze forever there.

In lines 3 and 4 the Epizeuxis is quite well managed; but the emphasis in line 4 falls uncomfortably on "then"; good sense, but bad metre. There are other interesting things in Dr. Boas' tactful selection.

Messrs. Routledge deserve double-congratulation on reviving the Muses Library and on the acuteness of their choice in selecting poets such as Wyatt and Clare, of whom editions were badly needed. The present

series is better produced and more skilfully edited than many of the volumes in the earlier series. Besides a critical and biographical introduction there is a brief anthology of critical comment from the poet's own time down to the present. Mr. Muir provides us with a number of unfamiliar poems from MSS. and useful textual notes. Wyatt is now recognised as a more powerful figure than the suave and slightly vapid Surrey. He is not a crabbed and unskilled metrist, but a poet who used the rhetorical pause to express the evasions and hesitancies of natural speech.

There is no need to underline the interest of Clare. His reputation has increased immensly over the last few years, mainly owing to the persistent effort of admirers such as Mr. Blunden who produced an earlier selection, the Tibbles, and Mr. Grigson who is the editor of the present volume. All of these poems of Clare are interesting; some have never been printed before, Mr. Grigson has also tracked others which have been published to a different source, and his text differs sometimes from the familiar ones.

Formal Spring is a neat little book, consisting of translations, printed with original texts, from Machault (14th century) down to Du Bellay and Louise Labé. Mr. Currey in his introduction is rather contemptuous of translators who render Mediaeval or Renaissance European poetry into their contemporary English equivalent. None the less his enchanting translation of Marot's *Chanson* "Une pastourelle Gentille" is as simple and shapely as a late mediaeval carol. Mr. Currey tends to be rather obvious in his choice; perhaps too much regard is paid to Ronsard and Du Bellay. He would have done more service, I feel, to have introduced Maurice Scève, Héroét and De Magny to a wider circle of readers. With this mild reservation one is constrained to admit that most of the translations here are of a remarkably high level. Besides a brief introduction there are helpful biographical and critical notes on the individual poets.

Mr. Fry in this Canterbury Festival Play detonates fewer phrases than usual. The characters are almost indistinguishable from one another, coated thickly with Jutish mud.

IAIN FLETCHER.

The Death of William Rufus, John Sibly (Fortune Press, 6s.), *Gangrel Verses,* William Barr (MacLellan, 7s. 6d.), *Quintessence,* William Lee (Nottingham, The Bramley Press, 5s.), *Thorns and Mary-Lilies,* John Henderson (Blackwood, 5s.), *Collected Poems,* Judith Bickle (Mitre Press, 7s. 6d.), *Arcadia,* Arthur Edward Nicholas (Books for To-day Ltd), *In Black and White,* Rhoda E. Cutbush (The Author), *Saint John's Eve,* Michael Gardner (The Author), *A Thrush Sings,* Ierne Ormsby (British Authors Press, 3s. 6d.), *The Hedgerows,* M. M. Johnson (Constable, 7s. 6d.), *Bronze Frieze,* N. H. Brettel (Oxford University Press, 6s.), *Firework Music,*

Peter Hellings (Fortune Press, 6s.), *The Farther View,* Oliffe Richmond (Chaterson Ltd., 5s.), *The Shadow of the Rope,* H. L'Estrange Malone (Mitre Press, 5s.), *Gabriel,* H. S. Vere-Hodge (Fortune Press, 7s. 6d.), *The Ship's Figure-Head,* A. Safroni-Middleton (Fortune Press, 5s.), *Metrical Psalter,* A. M. P. Dawson (The Author), *New Hyperion,* Geoffrey Handley-Taylor (Ed.) (George Ronald, 7s. 6d.).

Perhaps the most exciting of all the books at present under review is Mr. John Sibly's *The Death of William Rufus.* Mr. Sibly is an authentic poet, whose vigorous tone combines with expressive and poignant imagery to give his work an individual note which, owing much to modernist trends, has yet sufficiently assimilated all influences to provide us with stirring, if at times cacaphonous, poetry. In spite of occasional unpleasantness his verse is memorable, and one does not forget such lines as:

> We want the courage curled
> In each invincible bud
> In the sun's angry rays
> And the heroic blood;
> And when each beacon fails
> Give us, give us alone
> Matching the muscled crag
> Obstinacy of stone.

Mr. Barr's *Gangrel Verses* are not as exciting, but in spite of the ugsome title, his poems are full of that grand simplicity that is the true heritage of all Scots writers after Burns. Here is the homespun that will outlast many a dainty cambric.

Mr. Lee's work is also homespun, though marred by much prosiness and much dull competence. Yet he is not without a certain unassuming clearness of voice, a sturdy sincerity. This honesty of endeavour is also observable in the work of Mr. Henderson, which, rarely rising to the heights, is yet capable of beauty with its love of the small, the clean, and the humble.

In spite of an irritating foreword by Mr. Laurence Housman, damning it with faint praise, Miss Bickle's *Collected Poems* contains some verses of a similar charm, which partly compensate for the dullness of expression and saccharine sentimentality of much of the remainder of her work. Colourlessness and sentimentality are also to be found in the poems of the late Mr. Nicholas, whose "precious gleanings" offend as much by their imaginative scantiness as their preciosity. Miss Cutbush has none of these vices. She is a delicate water-colourist, given, however, to the conventional rather than the revelatory view, unlike Mr. Gardner, the sincerity of whose honest but unavailing attempts impresses, in spite of the mediocrity of his verse.

Mediocrity is a pitfall in the path of those who attempt simple sincerity, a pitfall which Miss Iërne Ormsby does not always avoid, though many of her poems are filled with the old, true magic. Such a one is "The Poet";

> He paused to watch a tiny whorl of dust
> Within a quiet street;
> And all the ventures of a vanished age
> Hurried about his feet.

It is this almost vanished appreciation of the *minutæ* of existence to which Mr. de la Mare refers in his delightful and inimitable preface to M. M. Johnson's *The Hedgerows*. He does little more than justice to the poems which follow, and his partisanship will be shared by all those who read them. Lucid, singing, sweet, they are as English as May, and as enchanting as hawthorn blossom upon the hills.

Mr. Brettel's pleasant verses are imbued with an easy charm, and an occasional still calm scene of countryside reminds us of past quietude and content, contrasting strangely with the pyrotechnics of Peter Hellings, whose Welsh vigour of language moves us more because of its urgency than its beauty. Sometimes cacaphonous, often tortured, always vigorous, Mr. Hellings' poems reveal a personality intensely aware of life's conflicts. Poetry itself occasionally retreats before the impetuosity of his utterance, but sometimes the magic is there, as in the poignant brutality of "Under a distorted Moon"; for Mr. Hellings is rarely quiet, unlike Oliffe Richmond whose dreary discoursiveness is matched only by the prolix fatuity of H. L'Estrange Malone, neither of whom are able to control their muses. The long poem, is admittedly, a difficult medium, but they could do worse than read H. S. Vere-Hodge's *Gabriel,* the pace of which rarely flags, being packed with incident and, in spite of an inadequately planned dramatic structure, possessing a certain charm and beauty.

The longer poems in A. Safroni-Middleton's *The Ship's Figure-Head* are the least satisfactory. Some of the shorter poems, however, reveal a sensitive and pleasing talent.

Mr. Dawson's metrical version of the Psalms is an attempt "to produce verse which brings out the meaning and the beauty of the original more adequately than does the prose translation. The attempt, not unnaturally, fails, though some of Mr. Dawson's versions exhibit an ingenious talent for versification.

Apart from that by Maurice Lindsay, the ten poems in *New Hyperion* are of the standard one might expect from such well-known writers as Christopher Hassall, John Pudney, Francis Berry and Wrey Gardiner. The prose content varies in quality but no one should miss Enid Starkie's superb essay on Gide or G. Wilson Knight's examination of *The Tragedy of Nan*. *New Hyperion* is a mixed bag, but perhaps the more interesting because it is so.

ROBIN SKELTON.

SPOKEN POETRY ON RECORDS

The gramophone companies perform a great service to poetry lovers and to posterity by making spoken poetry available in a series of interesting recordings.

Columbia have begun a noble venture in an Anthology of British Poetry. Extracts from Neville Coghill's modern version of the Canterbury Tales (DX 1572/3) are introduced by Mr. Coghill's rich and characterful rendering in Chaucerian English of the Prologue and the Wyf of Bath. Cecil Trouncer is the perfect reader of the extracts of the modern version which follows. There is gusto in the verse and in the reading.

Stephen Murray reads Wordsworth's The Solitary Reaper and other familiar lyrics (DX 1601) and extracts from The Prelude and a selection of sonnets (DX 1602). Three records (DB 2672/4) are devoted to Tintern Abbey and the Intimations. The sonnets and shorter lyrics give most pleasure. Mr Murray has a deeply resonant voice and is more easily glum than gay.

In the same series the Yeats recordings (DX 1637/8) yield up the poet's quality so much more completely. Loving service is done the poet by the readers C. Day Lewis and Mary O'Farrell. Sailing to Byzantium, Byzantium, Lapis Lazuli and other lyrics have that magic and mysticism and music which is Yeats. Last to be noted in this series are the Border Ballads (DX 1673) to which Ian Stewart brings a persuasive rhythm.

Of the poems read by their authors in the H.M.V. catalogue, Mr. T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets are already well-known to listeners to the Third Programme. Possession of these records (C 3598–3603) will help them to be better understood. Mr. Eliot's reading is artless but his understanding is clear in voice and timing.

Mr. Stephen Spender has a similar integrity (UC 3987/9). The listener gets accustomed to a monotonous delivery and a weak vocal grip and falls prey to the compulsion of precise definition in the poetry which haunts one after hearing. 'I think continually,' 'Tom's a–cold', and a revised version of 'An Elementary School Classroom' all get under the skin if one lets them. The poet makes no effort to compel.

As a reader, Mr. C. Day Lewis outshines Mr. Eliot and Mr. Spender. He has a flexible voice, his tone is musical, he achieves a nice balance between mood and content. Here are passages from his translation of the Georgics (C 3764) with four early poems on the reverse side, the sonnets of O Dreams O Destinations (C 3765) and a selection of more recent poems (C 3766) including The Christmas Tree, already a favourite.

These records are a substantial contribution to the Gramophone library which the Society means to build up.

JOHN HOLGATE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Your reviewer, Arthur Vivian, of a bundle of anthologies writes "Long ballads wrecked the *O.B.E.V.*" This is quite wrong. *The Oxford Book of English Verse* has never been wrecked and is still going strong—and for this reason: the final edition is not only an excellent anthology upon which nearly every other anthology draws for material (to say nothing of the B.B.C.) but forms an almost complete picture of the growth and changes of poetry from Langland and Chaucer till just after the Armistice of 1918. That is to say, it is a sort of history of English Poetry, a lyrical history, fully dated. Anyone reading it through, without consulting a single text-book on the subject, could write a short history of English poetry preceding the rise of Eliot's obscurantists—if, of course, his critical sense were fully articulate and developed. All the same, there are a few unfortunate omissions, perhaps the worst of them Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, and from the period covering 1910-20 (it really ends with 1920) a well-known lyric by Wilfrid Gibson and two sonnets by Sir John Squire. It is to the latter's great credit that he has always been an enthusiastic supporter of *The O.B.E.V.* although he was completely cut out of it. As to the wrecking ballads there are few real ballads in it, though many folk-songs and anonymous ballad-songs. A ballad tells a tale: and even the ancient Border Ballad is cautiously represented. But, in any anthology showing the growth of English poetry, it is necessary that a great deal of space be given to folk-song and ballad, because English lyrical poetry has largely sprung out of the anonymous ballad and ballad-song. It was, I think, Wordsworth and Coleridge who first discovered this, particularly Coleridge; and the "sprung-rhythm" of *Christabel* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* points to the natural genius of English metres.

I am, etc.,
HERBERT PALMER.

Sir,

In fairness to Harold Monro I should have stated in my article *A Huntingdonshire Poem* in your last issue that ten years after the publication of *Poems and Rhymes* he printed Jeffery Day's first serious poem "On the Wings of the Morning" in *Twentieth Century Poetry* (Chatto & Windus, 1929). This, signed "J.D.", had appeared in the *Cornhill* for July, 1917, during the author's lifetime, and was reprinted in the 1919 volume on page 38.

I am, etc.,
E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(New Series: No. 2)

This is the best set of entries I have yet judged in this competition. Very few poems were of a low standard, and those I have selected for high commendation are so nearly equal in my view that it has been very difficult to select the winner from among them.

Journey by Andrew Keith has great atmosphere—a general characteristic of this writer's work—and the line of the drawing is very firm. It lacks validity, being insufficiently compressed. *Caged Eagle* by Margaret Howard is a fine piece of work, marred by insufficient climax—"travesty" is a poor word with which to end a poem—and lacking sense of rhythm. *Garrisoned* by Mary Field is very powerful in its narrow space, excellent in its economy, insufficiently thought out: for how can a dimension take one to task? *Beauty is Rich* by Alan Dane has some great moments—"Beauty is bird and violent seas"—but is a little too facile. *Mist* by Joan Dawson is a compact poem, moving with ease and order to a climax which is as nebulous as the title, but it is a sure piece of work, marred only by the word "infinitely". *For Luke, 1947* by Elizabeth Cluer is a powerful piece of a savage intensity, very true and clear. A difficult rhythm is handled very well except in the last line which my ear fails to distinguish from prose in this place. One stress too many breaks all the balance. *Miracles* by Edith Roseveare uses all its words with great power and a true sense of their beauty in their ranks, but the troops are rather too many for the fort. Yet—such a stirring panoplied poem! *About Love* by Mary Cornell says more than all the others, and though what it says is not new—the best and truest things never are—it presents its proclamation with urgency and the music and power of the writer's heart are in it.

I shall share the prize between this last poem, *Garrisoned* by Mary Field and *For Luke, 1947* by Elizabeth Cluer.

Commended poems are set out below in alphabetical order:

Sheila Bain	Steyning, Sussex
Yorke Crompton	Russell Court, W.C.1
C. Bidwell Edkins	Holland Park, W.11
Denis Griffiths	Jersey, C.I.
J. K. G. Hoffman	Chesterfield
Sir Patrick Laird	Edinburgh, 12
Chris. Ogilvie	Edenbridge, Kent
Rita H. Padwick	London, W.C.1
H. V. S. Page	Liverpool
Celia Randall	N. Ireland
Joan Swift	Widnes, Lancs.
Ruth Tenney	London, S.W.5

T. W. Ramsey.

ABOUT LOVE

And when I asked about love he said
Let us consider its ways instead:
Love is glory and love is grief
Love is the dewdrop on the leaf
Love is the leaf underneath the dew
Love is all things old and new—
The beaten plowshare, the riven chain
The rain and the bowed blade under the rain
The forest, the mountain, the rhythmic tides,
Love is all these and much besides.
And O my heart, what more can we say
Than that love is night and that love is day,
And when life gladdens and the sun has shone
Love is what stays when the light is gone.

MARY CORNELL.

GARRISONED

I said I would come if you called me;
Time passes . . . yet you are dumb,
And tongue-tied speech is a two-edged sword,
Hard to overcome.

So unless a fourth dimension
Takes us to task again,
The intricate sword of your silence
Will rust, in my scabbard of pain.

MARY FIELD.

FOR LUKE 1947

Stranger to me, O stranger to myself
the years tug at their mooring ropes along
the quays of memory, the quays of loss.
What port, what most unwilling harbour's won?

Where you're familiar there you are most stranger
that ring no bell, no echo, touch no pulse

that used to leap and faint even at your voice
and now beats steadily with no sense of danger.

Yet here's compulsion: like the habit of marriage
I still turn to your likeness thinking of men
and have no comfort in any other look.
Shall I one day turn comfortless again?
Stranger to me, O stranger than myself
at the end of all voyages, will there be no recognition?

ELIZABETH CLUER.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S JUNIOR SECTION

How pleasant it is to be able to congratulate the prize-winners and those mentioned in our Junior Verse Competition. They should be humble for, receiving recognition means essentially that they are the custodians of, and have the sole responsibility for, a talent, a gift. It is a queer gift too, rather like the pearl in the oyster, a source of irritation and of wonder.

To each of those who were not successful I would say this—you have expressed yourself, you have entered the tourney, you have endured the scrutiny and examination, you have shown more courage than all the spectators, if you continue to be utterly true to yourself you must eventually succeed. If you act and write truly the result is never really important.

There were over three times as many entries as for our first competition, including a notable batch from the Junior readers of *The Daily Telegraph.*

It is always instructive to know how the mind of a critic works and you will be especially interested in the judge's comments. In supporting his choice of "The Pathway" for the senior award he puts his problem and the answer to me in this way—

> "In an open competition it is difficult to decide which poem is best in *its own class.* How near has the writer come to what he or she had in mind . . . that was the question put. June Buckner has produced a Japanese cameo that gets the poetry "between the lines", and it was for the severe self-sufficiency of the piece that the prize was given. No more has been said than the poem would bear. And above all things, even above the ability to write sometimes, the poet should know where to stop. There is no "strain and drain" about the poem. Until one reads carefully, "the muted consonants and internal alliterations are

hardly noticed, yet what continuity and music are induced by these means. I do not think she was mechanically conscious of these shifts, but rather that she was led by necessities of true expression."

This is really important. The sincere expression of careful observation and independent thought is worth all the artifices and mechanics of technical construction. Do not, I implore you, copy or imitate or be influenced in subject or expression.

Remember the advice of Polonius to his son Laertes—

"This above all—to thine own self be true;—"

Oh! by the way, Mr. John Holgate has reviewed some records that will, I think, particularly interest you. Do read what he says about them.

JOHN GRADDON.

CHILDREN'S PARTY

Here are some gramophone records for after tea on Sundays, and on weekdays too. The whole family will enjoy them. Hermione Hannen and Carleton Hobbs are the speakers and they could hardly be bettered. They are clear, deft, amusing, lugubrious, jolly and everything else by turn. Extracts from Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (H.M.V. C 3860) give us Father William, Beautiful Soap, a masterpiece of vocal dribbling by Mr. Hobbs, The Lobster Quadrille, Jabberwocky and, of course, The Walrus and the Carpenter. Traditional Rhymes and Jingles (H.M.V. C 3863) begins with Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son and ends with Mr. Nobody, who is everybody's friend. On the reverse is a delightful Anthology with the title, A First Sampler. There are two more records in the same series—Lear's Nonsense Songs and Stories (C 3861) and selections from A Child's Garden of Verse (C. 3862). This is going to be a most popular series, and the full complement of records is to be awaited with anticipatory joy.

JOHN HOLGATE.

CHILDREN'S PRIZES

14 to 17 years of age.

Book Prize: "The Pathway", June Buckner.

Membership Prizes: "Sailing Yachts", Susan Holliday; "Hero-worship", Gillian Thomas; "On Leaving School", Jeannette Smith; "Storm", R. N. Bartlett.

Three poems, "The Return of the Magi" by Mary Ireland, "Weavers' Chant" by Elsa Ivor and "The First Settlers in New Zealand" by G. J. Fuller, though not prize-winners, are highly commended. The subject of "The Return of the Magi" has been better dealt with by T. S. Eliot however, and even Mary Ireland's original imaginative gift could not quite subdue the "atmosphere" of that source. The other two poems have overcome their writers, one with ideas, one with words. These are splendid faults, indicating a temporary surplus of emotion and appreciation respectively. We know it is necessary for the poet to feel deeply, to revel in the richness of language; but a poem comes from the poet's mastery of these elements, a mastery that is aimed at the expression of "feeling" or "vision" through *selected* richness of language.

When we speak of rich language we do not always mean strange, exotic words and phrases. "The Pathway" by June Buckner, for instance, is extremely simple, gently touched in, and laconically quiet from first to last line, a small breath of music that lives in its own time and rhythm. With Susan Holliday's "Sailing Yachts" we go reaching out for new language patterns, and the wholeheartedness of the exploration compensates for the near-intoxication with words. Self-discipline would be beneficial here.

"Hero-worship" has been written with more care and thought. Gillian Thomas has made a "personal" poem of this piece. Observation can be objective, concerned with bringing the world of experience into perspective; or it can be subjective, directed to the end of relating oneself to the world of experience. Poetry derives from a balance of these two facets of observation.

"On Leaving School" and "Storm", though very different in tone, are alike in that they are both centred on common happenings. Treatment of the ordinary in life is not alien to poetry; one of the most valuable abilities of the poet is his, or her, capacity to appreciate fully the events that habits of acceptance obscure to a uniform greyness. The exaggerated simile in stanza 2 of "Storm" is out of character, but the error is a minor vagary of judgment.

CYRIL HUGHES.

THE PATHWAY

A path leads up the hillside,
Not smooth and not straight.
Now, gently and sweetly,
Eddying down by its side
Hurries a babbling brook.
Its waters are cool

Like leaves after rain,
Lulling the tired traveller who stands
Seeing beauty in all.

JUNE BUCKNER.

Up to 13 years of Age.

Book Prize: "Sonnet on Arnos Park", Elaine Ratcliff.

Award of this prize rests on the authority of Alexander Pope. "Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find . . ." The sonnet in its various forms is a severe discipline, be the poet young or old, and "Arnos Park", despite errors of forgetfulness in lines 2 and 5 of the sestette, and despite the flatness of its conclusion, is a remarkable work for a child of thirteen. No other poem in this class reached so high a technical level, but it was heartening to note the rich, original vitality of ballads and songs such as those submitted by Ann John, Patricia Milsom, Heather Ann Brown, G. R. Sutherland and H. M. Gwatkin-Wiltshire.

CYRIL HUGHES.

SONNET ON ARNOS PARK

There is a brook that flows through Arnos Park
Whose waters calm, unsullied are o'erhung
By weeping willow branches far outflung
Towards its limpid depths, so cool and dark.

Around the rustic bridge young children play,
Or climb the trees that span its waters deep.
From bough to bough the timid squirrels leap
Bright eyed and nimble in their coats of grey.

At intervals along the murmuring stream
Are waterfalls, minute and picturesque,
Cascades of beauty, lovely as a dream.

The business man, with briefcase under arm,
At dusk across the lamplit pathway speeds,
With scarce a sideways glance at all this charm.

ELAINE RATCLIFF.

THE POETRY SOCIETY

AND THE LONDON CONGRESS OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

From the 28th July to the 7th August, at Bedford College, the Modern Language Association entertained the London Congress of the International Federation of Teachers of Living Languages. The Congress proper covered the last four days of this period, when vital matters relating to the study and teaching of modern languages were discussed by delegates from many countries.

One of the features of this most searching and ambitious programme was the presentation by the Poetry Society of a reading from modern English poets. Twenty-five poems from the works of fourteen poets were rendered by Pamela Barnard, Daphne Thomson, and David Holmes in a production distilled, balanced and presented by Thomas Foley.

It was in a spirit of anticipation and hope that Mr. Leslie Wilson, the Chairman for the occasion, introduced Mr. Foley who, in a witty preamble, defined his approach. Wisely, he accepted the impossibility of giving more than a cross-section of great works, and stated his premise that an arbitrary selection, even by a committee, would be invidious. Therefore he had allowed his personal predilection judicious sway and aimed at a balance of satisfying material.

As the programme progressed, it was apparent that Mr. Foley had relied on Gerard Manley Hopkins, W. B. Yeats and T. S. Eliot as the major figures in his tapestry, and interwoven Hardy, Bridges and Belloc as the romantic rearguard for the earlier part of the century, with Auden, Spender and Day Lewis as the sociological voices of latter-day awareness.

The poems were read alternately by each reader, with deftness of expression and beauty of utterance. Miss Barnard, perhaps, was most outstanding in her presentations from the *Four Quartets* of Eliot, Miss Thomson in the lyrical passages of Bridges and Yeats, and Mr. Holmes when he reached heights of resonance and perception as a fitting climax to "You That Love England" by C. Day Lewis.

It would be a simple matter to point out important omissions from a cross-section presentation of this character, in particular the lack of emphasis on the lyrical counterpoint that seems always to keep its singing strength in English poetry. Also, one could stress the omission of poets with a spiritual declaration of hope. But to have rectified these omissions in order to provide an exhaustive programme of the past fifty years would have taken several sessions. The evening, illustrating the major influences, the chief technical developments and, above all, the strong Celtic *motif* in recent English verse, was in itself complete, rewarding and, all in all, a lovely occasion.

This opinion was endorsed by the lively appreciation of the many delegates who joined in the informal and informative discussion which followed. Much that we have come to regard as obscure had been perceived and enjoyed; a tribute to the devotion to our language and its poetry by the delegates from abroad, and above all to the perception and clarity of the presentation by the Poetry Society readers and their producer.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE POETRY SOCIETY: ADULT GOLD MEDAL EXAMINATION

The next Adult Gold Medal Examination will take place at 33 Portman Square, W.1, on Thursday, 7th December, 1950, at 7 p.m. Entries close on 1st November, 1950.

THE POETRY SOCIETY: FRIDAY READINGS

The Readings at 33, Portman Square, W.1, which were resumed on Friday, 29th September, at 6-15, continue as a regular feature of the Winter programme. They are followed by an Open Meeting for general discussion and conversation. All are invited to attend, even if they cannot come to the more formal meeting earlier in the evening.

Fri., Nov. 10th at 6.15 p.m.	E. Guy Pertwee, with students of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. A personal selection.
Fri., Nov. 17th at 6.15 p.m.	Women Poets. A Reading by students of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art arranged by Miss Katreen Lack. Sir Kenneth R. Barnes will take the chair.
Fri., Nov. 24th at 6.15 p.m.	Any Questions. Arranged by Mr. John Graddon. Members of the Poetry Society are asked to send in questions for this programme.

CENTRES

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE POETRY CENTRE

Nov. 11th at 2.30 p.m.	*Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost.* Mrs. E. Van den Bergh, Beacon View, Beacon Hill, Penn. 3274.
Dec. 9th at 3.0 p.m.	Members' own compositions or favourite poems. Mrs. F. Dillon-Edwards, Faulkners, Chesham Bois. Amersham 1121.

THE CAMBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Douglas B. Mortlock, Esq., 187 Histon Road, Cambridge.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society. Formed 1946)

President: Dame Sybil Thorndike

Vice-President: Miss Margaret Rawlings

Informal readings are held each month in members' homes, and occasional public readings at the National Trust Museum, 3 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.3. Full particulars from the *Hon. Secretary*, John E. Carroll, 5 Redesdale Street, S.W.3.

THE EALING POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—The Secretary, 10 Culmington Road, Ealing, W.13. Meetings are scheduled for 15th November and 13th December.

THE FLORIDA POETRY CENTRES

(Formed 1946)

President General: Marie Tello Phillips

Vice-President General: Lillie Reed Zortman

State Presidents:

Connecticut: Lillie Offen Reed.
Florida: Pearl Safford.
Indiana: Grace Porterfield Polk.
Kentucky: Ethel Koger.
Maine: Effie Lawrence Marshall.
Minnesota: Margarette Dickson.
Pennsylvania: Lillie Reed Zortman.
Tennessee: Polly McKibben.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 46 York Road, Guildford.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays in each month at 8—9-30 p.m., at 9 Wentworth Mansions, Keats Grove, N.W.3, and the following Programme has been arranged for the period until 18th January, 1951:

1950

Nov.	2	Hampstead and Hampstead Poets.
Nov.	15	Speeches, Soliloquies, and Scenes from Shakespeare.
Dec.	7	Seasonable Poems.
Dec.	21	No Meeting.

1951

Jan.	4	A Happy New Year.
Jan.	18	The Five Senses.

Members are invited to bring their friends as guests who may take part in the readings.

THE HOVE POETRY CENTRE

The Inaugural Meeting will be held at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton on November 18th, 1950 at 3-6 p.m. Reception is at 3.40-4 p.m. Tea 4 p.m. Enquiries should be sent to:—Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Mrs. O. Hasluck, 633 Lisburn Road, Belfast; or Miss H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate.

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE SUSSEX POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Mrs. Doris R. Richards, Oak Cottage, Eason's Green, Framfield, Sussex.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

This Group, dedicated to furthering the work of active Poets within the Society, gathers "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry". All interested in attending future meetings are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey.

LEIGH HENRY

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s. The charge for the criticism of each additional poem is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

Junior preliminary examinations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

COMPETITIONS

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1950

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1950.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above bi-monthly competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 15th December, 1950.

THE HOWARD PARSONS' EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1951

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition. 1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should

not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope, as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1951. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1951. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1951

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fourth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.

For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10 may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator; the winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1951. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION FOR 1951

Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society, offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Competitors who must be members of The Poetry Society, may submit not more than two poems, previously unpublished, of not more than 100 lines. All entries should be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author; poems should be addressed to "The Holmes Prize", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, not later than 1st April, 1951. The judges may divide the prize money at their discretion, and the winning poem or poems may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors are asked to keep copies of their entries as these cannot be returned.

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